

Province Pulls Funding for National Maritime Centre

On January 12, 2010 the mayors of Vancouver's three North Shore communities received notice from Kevin Krueger, BC's minister of Tourism Culture and the Arts, that the province would not be honouring its commitment to fund the National Maritime Centre for the Pacific and the Arctic. Construction of the Maritime Centre was to be upland of the Centennial Pier near the foot of Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver on part of the site currently under development by Pinnacle Properties. Full commitment to build the Centre was contingent on four-way support from the municipalities, private sector, and both the federal and provincial governments. Although matching funds are still promised from the federal government and millions of dollars in land has been set aside by the City of North Vancouver City, without the \$9 million pledged by the province, the project is now dead in the water. "The money just isn't out there," said North Vancouver City mayor Darrell Mussatto.

"We are disappointed with this outcome, however, we will move forward," mayor Mussatto told the press. "We appreciate the Province's current financial difficulties and respect its decision. The City is grateful for the efforts of many stakeholders who have given their time and resources to bring the vision of a National Maritime Centre this far, particularly the NMC Society."

The total financing for the Maritime Centre was pegged at \$70 million with approximately \$60 million coming from the provincial and federal governments and another \$10 million to be raised privately through the NMC Society. The City of North Vancouver would have contributed an additional \$75 million in waterfront land and buildings. The City will now review its options and prepare a revised plan for use of the site.

Mayor Mussatto said North Vancouver will also consult with the province on what to do with the nearly \$5.5 million in unspent funds it has already received. Minister Krueger has encouraged they be used "towards purposes consistent with the spirit of the original grant, such as the preservation of British Columbia's maritime heritage or other arts and culture initiatives." *D.R.*

50th Anniversary of Deepest Dive

On January 23, 1960, Capt Don Walsh and Chief John Michel made history when they descended in the bathyscaph TRIESTE into the deepest part of the ocean — nearly seven miles down into the Marianas Trench. No one has ever gone as deep since. Today the TRIESTE is housed at the National Museum of the US Navy in Washington, DC. *Source: MTS Society*

Pacific Coast Shipbuilders Form Alliance

BC shipbuilders have joined forces to provide a unified voice to government for BC's shipbuilding industry. In an early December news release, the newly-formed Pacific Coast Shipbuilders Association (PCSA) said: "The BC shipbuilding industry is ready, willing and capable to accept the challenge brought forth by the Government of Canada to deliver shipbuilding programs to meet the needs of its federal fleet renewal."

Member companies currently include:

- Alberni Engineering Ltd
- Allied Shipbuilders Ltd
- Esquimalt Drydock Co Ltd
- Intercon Marine Inc
- Jenkins Marine Ltd
- Meridian Marine Industries Inc
- Nanaimo Shipyard Ltd
- Ramsay Group
- Vancouver Drydock Company Ltd
- Vancouver Shipyards Co Ltd
- Victoria Shipyards Co Ltd

PCSA members make up the majority of industry and labour in the BC shipbuilding industry and a prime focus of the group will be securing a significant portion of the \$40 billion in new construction announced in the National Shipbuilding Policy last July. Federal program includes construction of over 50 ships during the next 30 years.

"We believe the West Coast shipbuilding industry should be a participant in this program," said the PCSA's first chairman John Shaw. "It is important that all levels of government recognize and support B.C.'s shipbuilding industry for political, strategic and geographical reasons." *Source: PCSA*

AUVs to Map Canadian Arctic Seabed

Natural Resources Canada has taken delivery of two 'Explorer' autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) from International Submarine Engineering in Port Moody BC. The vehicles will be deployed to the high Arctic next year to map the seabed

in support of Canada's territorial claim under Article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Canada has ratified the UNCLOS treaty and has until 2013 to submit a claim to support its rights under international law to natural resources in the Arctic Ocean beyond the 200 nautical mile limit.

The Explorer AUVs are designed to operate autonomously underneath the Arctic ice shelf at depths of up to 5000 meters. The vehicles utilize onboard sonar systems to collect data about the seafloor and can travel 450 kilometres during a single mission. *Chuck Bunton.*



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